

**PATIENT NEWSLETTER**  
**BOVEY TRACEY & CHUDLEIGH PRACTICE**  
**April 2017**

**Practice News**

The practice recently won the “**Small Employer of the Year Award**” from Education, Training + Skills in recognition of our support for lifelong learning within the workplace through apprenticeships.

Our Receptionist Leah was also nominated for Apprentice of the Year and whilst not shortlisted it is a great achievement to have been nominated. Not only did Leah achieve a distinction in Level 2 in her NVQ in Business Administration she is now working hard towards her Level 3 and I am sure will be equally successful. The award really is the result of whole team effort and reflects our ethos for lifelong support, learning and development by all staff, for all staff. Another great achievement for the practice to be proud of.

As many of you will be aware **Dr John Heather** retired from the practice on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. Patients previously registered with Dr Heather have now been allocated a new doctor within the practice; please just ask when you next contact the surgery to find out who your doctor is.

**Janet**, one of our Receptionists also retired on the 31<sup>st</sup> March after 10 years in the practice and we welcome **Sarah** to the reception team. We also welcomed **Natalie** to the practice nurse team in March.

**Meningococcal ACWY Immunisation**

Vaccination to protect against group W meningococcal (MenW) disease is now being offered to young people born between **1<sup>st</sup> September 1998 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 1999**.

This disease can cause meningitis (inflammation of the brain) and septicaemia (blood poisoning) that can kill in hours and those who recover may be left severely disabled and young people, especially those starting university, are particularly at risk of MenW.

**PPG News**

We held our Annual General Meeting in January and re-elected our Chair, Michael Benson, our Vice-Chair Rod Wallace and Secretary Amanda Coleridge to serve for another year. Our AGM next year will be held at Tower House Surgery on Wednesday January 18<sup>th</sup> 2018; followed by an Open Meeting at Riverside Surgery on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018, some dates for your diary.

So how will we build on what has already been achieved...

Our PPG Core Group meets every 6 weeks or so and the agenda contains some standing items that are discussed every meeting and other items that vary. These include items like

- Discussing any feedback that has come into the practice for example through the 'Friends and Family Test,' or via the annual practice questionnaire.
- Learning from visitors who come to talk to us for example about services in the area or about their roles. Recent visitors have talked to us about the importance of medical research and we also have heard from the newly appointed Wellbeing coordinators appointed to our area.
- We also will pursue more specific projects to help support the idea of Wellbeing.
- Working on how we can improve our communication with all patients, including those who do not use the internet or email.

Details of our plans for the year will be on the practice website shortly. You can also find all our agendas, and minutes of Core Group meetings there; hard copies are also available in folders in the waiting rooms at both Riverside and Tower House.

If you do go online have a look at our [Facebook page @RATHPPG](#), there's up to date information and ideas you might like to browse.

If you are interested in learning more about the Core Group or would like to get involved you can pick up a leaflet at the surgery, speak to Amanda, the Practice Manager, visit the practice website or contact us by email at [btcp.ppg@nhs.net](mailto:btcp.ppg@nhs.net)

## Dyrons Journal – Free Talking Newspaper for the Visually Impaired

Hear the news from the Mid Devon Advertiser and Teignmouth Post



Excellent sound quality.

Sent to you WEEKLY by USB Stick.

FREE digital players available.

For further details or to register your interest please call Brian on 01626 821034.



## Car Parking

We have received feedback from a patient that parked cars are blocking the driveways in and around Bucks Close, Bovey Tracey making it very difficult for residents to get in and out.

We are fortunate to have some parking at both of our surgeries and appreciate at times they are very busy. However there is plenty parking in the public pay and display car parks opposite both surgeries and we would ask patients to park considerately if street parking especially in the residential areas around the surgeries.

## Research News

As many of you may have seen in the local press our Practice is one of the best GP surgeries in the region for recruiting people to take part in health research studies.

Our Research Team, made up of Dr Daniel Thomas, Practice Nurse Rachael Minty, Dr Ben Ward, HCA Jodie Rice and Administrator Nina Joint, had recruited 145 people to participate in clinical research studies already as of January 2017.

Dr Daniel Thomas, the practice research lead GP, said: "Medical research is essential for us to continue to learn how to provide the best quality medical care. Being a Clinical Research Network Practice gives our patients the opportunity to be part of this exciting work. It allows patients a chance to make a valuable contribution to advances in their own health and that of other people. It empowers people to be part of the wider healthcare community and be involved in making a real difference to future patient care.

"Being involved in research at the surgery helps us as clinicians to keep up to date with the leading advances in medical care. This helps us provide the best quality healthcare to our patients and the local community. The vast majority of patient contact in the NHS is in primary care, and the work we do means that the findings of research are directly relevant to our own practice population. We would like to say thank you for all the hard work and commitment from patients and staff in helping us become the highest recruiting surgery in Devon in the last year."



Our continued work within the field of Research, and this excellent recruitment figures, are a real achievement for the Practice.

## The Repeat Medication Cycle

We continuously aim to improve the safety of medications prescribed to our patients. Recently we changed the way repeat medications are ordered to improve safety, efficiency and reduce waste.

The practice requires you, the patient, or a carer to order your prescriptions yourself. Please order **7 – 10 days** before you are due to run out to ensure the repeat prescription process can be completed. Please avoid ordering any earlier or later than this.

Reception can provide you with a unique username and password for the Surgery's online ordering system so you can securely and quickly order your repeat medications. Alternatively repeat slips can be posted or handed in to the Surgery.

Third parties are no longer able to order medication on your behalf. This includes ALL pharmacies, whether community pharmacies or online pharmacies or companies who order appliances for you (called appliance contractors).

From 1<sup>st</sup> May you will also no longer be able to order your repeat prescriptions using our **Practice website** and will need to order online using SystemOnline.

All patients registered with our practice can choose any pharmacy to dispense their medicines. The practice has no special relationship with any one pharmacy. The repeat medication process explained below applies regardless of the pharmacy that you use. No pharmacy can order medication on your behalf.

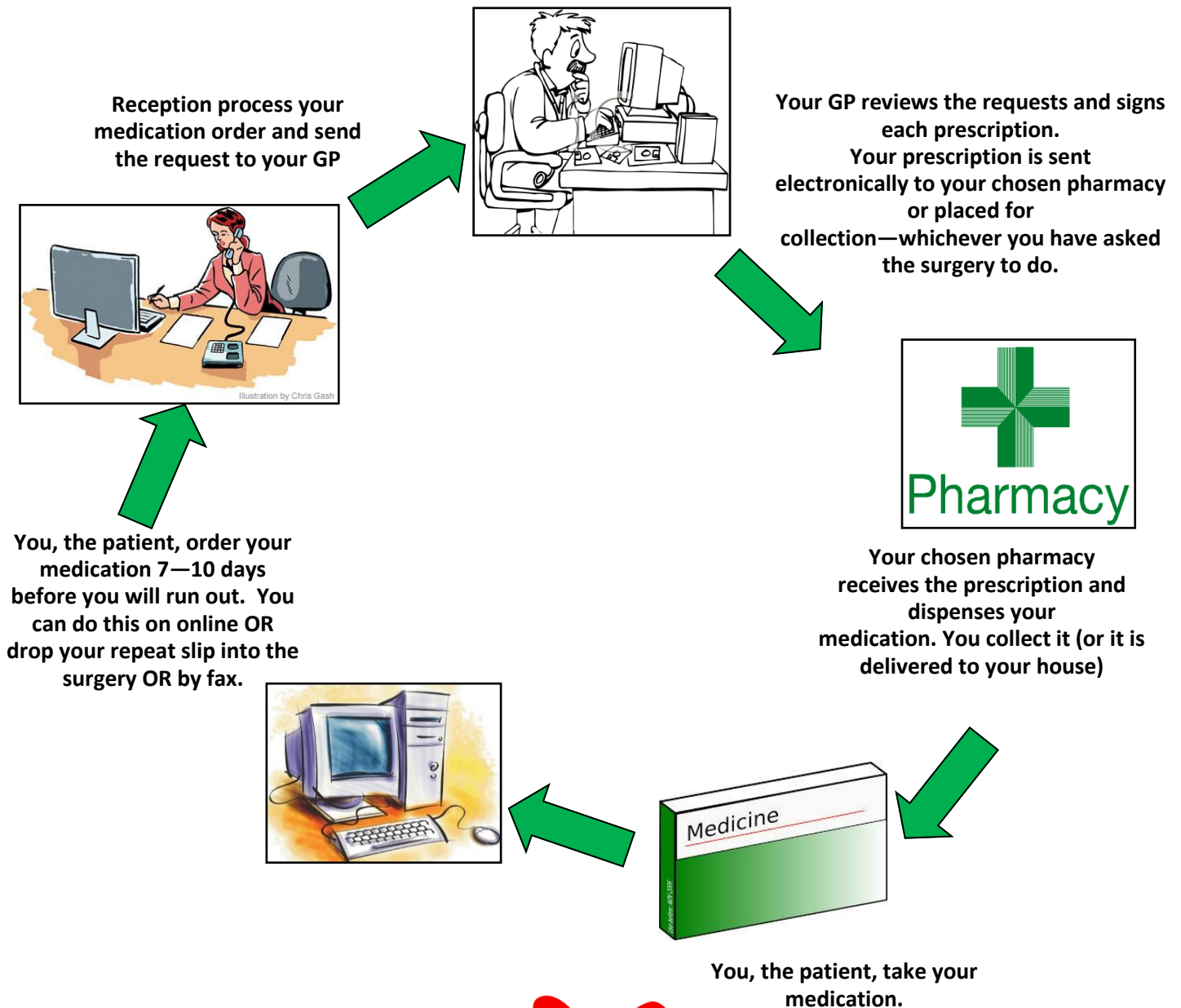
Did you know that GPs always sign every request for repeat medication individually? This is a vital part of the process and legally required.

This change is supported by South Devon and Torbay Clinical Commissioning Group, who have responsibility for the majority of healthcare in this area. The change will improve safety, efficiency and reduce waste.

If you would like any more information on this process, please contact the Patient Experience Team.

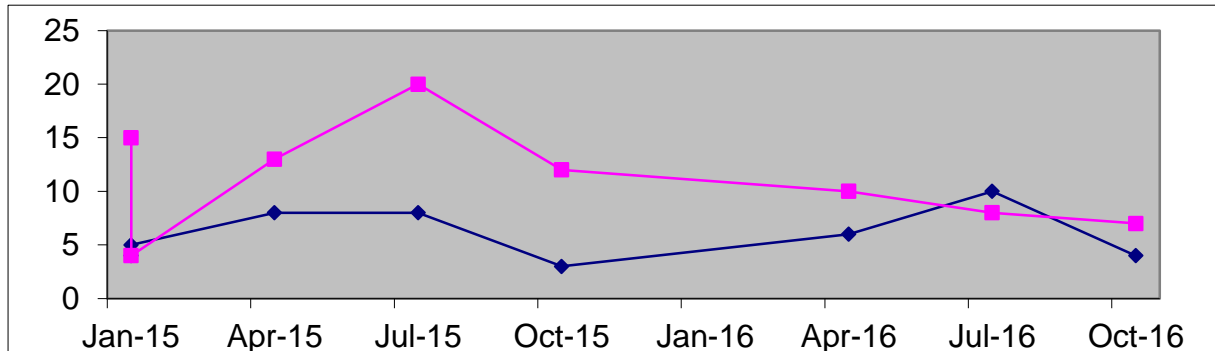
Call: 01803 652578 (Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm)  
Email: [patientfeedback.sdtccg@nhs.net](mailto:patientfeedback.sdtccg@nhs.net)  
Freepost: Patient Experience  
FREEPOST RTEZ-YHRC-RZKZ  
South Devon and Torbay CCG  
Ponoma House, Torquay, TQ2 7FF

## The Repeat Medication Cycle



**Third parties cannot order prescriptions on your behalf. Third parties include ALL pharmacies, including online pharmacies, and appliance contractors. Exceptions include blister pack patients and in exceptional circumstances when agreed with the surgery on a case-by-case basis.**

## Patient Complaints



Considering the number of contacts the practice has with patients, the incidence of written (blue) and verbal (pink) complaint remains very low. Between Oct & Dec 2016 we received 4 written and 7 verbal complaints across the whole practice. We value all patient complaints, comments and feedback to help us review and improve our services and it is great to see the trend line for complaints remains low at a time when patient demand and complexity is higher than ever before.

Amanda, our Practice Manager is always very happy to discuss any problems or frustrations you may experience with our services either by telephone or in person. And of course we also appreciate the many kind comments we receive from patients.

## Act F.A.S.T Campaign

- 1 in 4 people would fail to call 999 when witnessing first signs of a stroke
- While the majority of people (93%) would call 999 if they saw a stroke, a quarter (24%) of people incorrectly think that they need to see two or more signs of a stroke before making the call
- People worry about calling 999 through fear of embarrassment or acting incorrectly
- There are over 100,000 strokes a year in the UK, causing over 40,000 deaths with two thirds of stroke survivors leaving hospital with a disability

Public Health England today launches its annual Act FAST campaign to remind people of the key symptoms of stroke and the importance of calling 999 immediately if they notice any single one of the symptoms in themselves or others.

- **Face** – has their face fallen on one side? Can they smile?
- **Arms** – can they raise both their arms and keep them there?

- **Speech** – is their speech slurred?
- **Time** – to call 999 if you see any single one of these signs

Additional symptoms of a stroke and mini stroke can include:

- Sudden loss of vision or blurred vision in one or both eyes
- Sudden weakness or numbness on one side of the body
- Sudden memory loss or confusion
- Sudden dizziness, unsteadiness or a sudden fall, especially with any of the other symptoms

A stroke is a brain attack that happens with the blood supply to the brain is cut off, caused by a clot or bleeding in the brain. There are around 100,000 strokes in the UK every year and it is the leading cause of severe adult disability. There are over 1.2 million people in the UK living with the effects of stroke. A mini stroke is also known as a transient ischaemic attack (TIA). It is caused by a temporary disruption in the blood supply to part of the brain.

Information available on [www.nhs.uk/actfast](http://www.nhs.uk/actfast) [www.facebook.com/ActFAST999](https://www.facebook.com/ActFAST999)

### SELF CARE: HAYFEVER MEDICATION

South Devon and Torbay Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is responsible for the majority of healthcare in this area. The CCG is continuously reviews prescribing to ensure that prescribing is evidence-based and offers the NHS the best quality and value for money. **Following CCG guidance, the Practice will no longer routinely prescribe medicines for hayfever.**

The CCG want to significantly reduce the money spent on medicines for minor ailments – or self care conditions - so that more money is available for treating more serious conditions such as cancer and heart disease. We are requesting that patients to buy medicines themselves where appropriate.

A number of medicines for hayfever are available over the counter from pharmacies, and some are available in supermarkets and shops. This includes a range of tablets and liquids, nasal sprays and eye drops. Your community pharmacist can offer you expert advice on treatments.

We recommend that you ask for a non-branded (generic) product to treat your symptoms, as these contain the same drug and often cost significantly less than the branded version. We hope that you appreciate the reason for this decision but should you want to discuss this change in approach, please contact the patient experience team at the CCG:

Telephone: 01803 652 578 (lines are open Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm)

Email: [patientfeedback.sdtccg@nhs.net](mailto:patientfeedback.sdtccg@nhs.net)

Write to: Patient Experience

NHS South Devon and Torbay CCG

FREEPOST RTEZ-YHRC-RZKZ

Pomona House, Oak View Close, Torquay, TQ2 7FF

## Clinician Time Lost to DNA's (Did Not Attend)

Non-attendance of appointments has a real impact on both the practice and its patients. Reducing DNA's is important for improving access for patients and makes best use of clinicians' time.

In just 4 days during March **48 DNA's** were recorded at Riverside Surgery (6¼ hours of Practice Nurse Time and 3 hours of GP Time), and **14 DNA's** (3 hours of Practice Nurse Time and 50 minutes of GP Time).

You can cancel an appointment by telephone, online via our website or using SystmOnline, in person or by fax. We also offer a text message appointment reminder service.

Please help us reduce the number of lost appointments by cancelling unwanted appointments.

GP APPOINTMENT?  
CAN'T MAKE IT?  
DON'T NEED IT?  
**CANCEL IT!**

## Bowel Cancer Awareness

Bowel Cancer is very treatable but the earlier it is diagnosed, the easier it is to treat. If you have any symptoms, don't be embarrassed and don't ignore them. Doctors are used to seeing lots of people with bowel problems.

The symptoms of bowel cancer can include:

- Bleeding from your bottom and/or blood in your poo
- A change in bowel habit lasting for three weeks or more
- Unexplained weight loss
- Extreme tiredness for no obvious reason
- A pain or lump in your tummy

Most people with these symptoms do not have bowel cancer as other health problems can cause similar symptoms. But if you have one or more of these please contact your Doctor.

### UK Bowel Cancer Screening Programmes

If you are aged between 60 - 74, you will be invited to take part in bowel cancer screening every two years. Bowel cancer screening aims to detect bowel cancer at an early stage, when treatment has the best chance of working. The test can also find polyps (non-cancerous growths), which may develop into cancer.

If you are aged 75 or over, you can ask for a screening test by calling the free bowel cancer screening helpline on **0800 707 60 60**.